

Public Comment for BRC hearing, Boston, MA, October 12, 2011

The Blue Ribbon Commission has provided a valuable service in conducting a comprehensive assessment of the current dilemma over what to do with radioactive waste. In the Report, Section 2.3.1 on Ethical Responsibility describes the responsibility the current generation has toward future generations, as mandated by the Federal Government several decades ago: Those who have been creating nuclear waste should not leave the problem of storing it to future generations. The Blue Ribbon Commission Report is evidence of a concerted and comprehensive effort to find the most acceptable solution for all.

Additional ethical considerations could include the following:

1. Policies to promote additional nuclear power plants cause ever increasing accumulations of waste material, putting future generations at even greater risk. These future generations would have to confront an ever expanding exposure to the hazards involved in dealing with nuclear waste, including temporary storage, highly dangerous reprocessing strategies, transportation and potential problems caused by unstable seismic and hydrological conditions on deep geological nuclear disposal facilities.
2. From start to finish, citing and building nuclear plants and storing nuclear waste is proving to be more and more costly and less and less competitive when compared with safer alternative forms of energy. Perhaps our government should have a mandate for proposing energy policies that diminish financial burdens for future generations.
3. An awareness of the contribution of fossil fuels to climate change has led to the development of alternative sources of energy. This conscientious endeavor shows an acknowledgement of the importance of our global ecosystem and the abundant forms of life it supports. We could have an energy outlook in line with our growing ecological sensitivity, one that encourages efficiency, conservation and less hazardous types of energy.

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